



The Board of Park and Recreation Commissioners of Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, met at the Veterans Park Indoor Shelter, located at 2136 Central Avenue, Charlotte, NC 28205 on April 11, 2017 at 6:00 p.m.

PRC MINUTES
April 11, 2017

ATTENDANCE

PRC Present:

Elaine Powell, Chair
Kendel Bryant, Vice Chair
Tristan McMannis, Executive Secretary
Sterling Martin
Ed Barnhart
Heidi Pruess
Peter Engels
Doug Burnett
Brian Cox
Mary Johnson
Jim Garges, Director of Park and Recreation

PRC Absent:

Vacant – South 3 (Tonya Phifer)
Vacant – Central 3 (Abe Early)
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Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 6:10 p.m. by Chair Elaine Powell, which was followed by the pledge of allegiance.

Welcome and Introductions:

Each Commissioner introduced themselves and the park region they represent.

Proclamations, Awards and Recognitions: None

Public Appearance:

Richard Shaw

Mr. Shaw came before the PRC in opposition of the Linda Lake Neighborhood Park.

Staff and Public Presentations

Program Presentation by Community and Recreation Center Services

Agriculture's Role in Recreation – Stephanie Frisbee

Stephanie Frisbee, Facility Manager, came before the PRC to share a presentation on agriculture's role in recreation. Stephanie's presentation shared statistical data on farming in Mecklenburg County and beyond and the importance of children, and adults, understanding where their food comes from. A fifth-generation farmer herself, Stephanie shared the programs she has implemented at her center to raise understanding of farming and growing fresh produce with children and their parents. Stephanie's presentation can be viewed here: [Agriculture's Role in Recreation](#) Handouts were provided and can be viewed here: [Infographic](#) and [BAARN](#)

Park and Recreation Commission Priorities

Adequate Funding: CIP Update

Director Garges shared that all remaining projects from the 2008 bond issue are included in the FY19-23 CIP. The Board was reminded that Park and Recreation projects are paid for from PayGo funds and Schools and CPCC are bond funded. The County must maintain the debt ratio as set by the BOCC, therefore, all the needs will be examined and each Department will be given a percentage for capital projects based on the debt policy. It is possible Park and Recreation could be given \$150 million for FY19-23.

As in the past, the Department is hopeful they will receive a percentage of the total capital program for FY18 land acquisition and that going forward, the County does not take land acquisition funding from the Department's FY19-23 CIP allocation.

The Board discussed how to best advocate for the Department. Director Garges suggested they make the BOCC aware of the importance of meeting the needs of the public as indicated by community surveys. Commissioner Barnhart said it would make a greater impact if more groups, besides the PRC, were advocating before the BOCC for the Department.

Land Preservation: Land Acquisition Update

Director Garges made a presentation on Land Acquisition and can be viewed here: [Land Acquisition Overview](#). The presentation covered our status of land acquisition, our priorities, our service gap, as well as our 2015 Master Plan goals. The presentation also showed the strong support by the public to preserve land as evidenced by the land bonds passed since 1999.

Commissioner Pruess expressed concern for protection of park land from development and what might be options and tools available to protect the land we now have. Director Garges reminded the PRC that the Department has internal policies to help with protection and preservation such as the initial bio-diversity assessment on all undeveloped land, a 50 to 100-foot buffer around parks, no more than 50% of parks developed and no more than 10% of Nature Preserves developed.

Active Community Engagement – Advisory Council’s

Commissioner Bryant reported on a concern from the February PRC Retreat regarding Advisory Council meetings. The goal is to ensure that all advisory council meetings are consistent and have agendas that include the PRC priorities and that members are actively engaged in the meeting.

The Commissioner’s shared ideas about how the advisory council meetings could be made more meaningful and ideas from their own councils that have worked. Some of those ideas were:

- Moving the meetings around to different areas of the County
- Include “active” meetings (biking, work project, walking tours, etc.)
- Having council members participate in agenda topics, presentations
- Having an annual “All Advisory Council” meeting
- Getting the members out to ground breakings, grand openings and ribbon cuttings.
- View advisory council members as future PRC
- Seek assistance from staff as needed
- Collaborate with other advisory councils

Advisory Council Appointments/Reappointments:

South:

Motion was made by Commissioner Barnhart to appoint **Carolyn Millen and Mike Lyon** to full terms on the South Advisory Council, expiring 6/2020, which was seconded by Commissioner Burnett and approved unanimously.

Director’s Report:


Director Garges reported on the following:

Greenways for Mecklenburg: Director Garges gave an update on the newly organized 501C3 Greenways for Mecklenburg. An information flyer was provided and can be viewed here: [Greenways for Mecklenburg](#). Everyone was invited to attend the Little Sugar Creek Greenway, Cordelia Park Segment, Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting on May 3, 2017 at 4:30 p.m. Following the ribbon cutting there will be a kick off for the Greenways for Mecklenburg foundation at the Free-Range Brewery, located at 2320 N. Davidson Street. Information will be shared about the foundations purpose and possibly a challenge grant announcement. Commissioner Barnhart will be the President of the organization.

Budget Dates: The following budget dates were provided.

Tuesday, May 30	11 a.m.	CMGC Chamber	Manager’s Recommended Budget
Monday, June 5	6 p.m.	CMGC Chamber	Public Hearing for Recommended Budget
Thursday, June 8	3 p.m.	CMGC Room 267	The Board will receive a detailed overview of the Manger’s FY2018 Recommended Budget
Monday, June 12	9 a.m.	CMGC Room 267	Board Straw Vote Session
Tuesday, June 13	3 p.m.	CMGC Room 267	Board Straw Vote Session
Tuesday, June 20	6 p.m.	CMGC Chamber	Budget Adoption

Budget Update: Mario Chang gave a quick update on the budget using information from a recent presentation to the Executive Team. Mario provided a bottom line view of the additional ask in the FY18 budget. See below. The full presentation can be viewed here: [FY18 Budget Request](#)



FY18 New Funding Summary

FY18 Budget "Ask"	Annual Operating Expenses	One-time Funds	Revenue	Total Request
FY17 Projects – ONA	\$ 820,900	\$ 52,000	*	\$ 872,900
FY18 Projects – ONA	\$ 1,294,500	\$ 296,500	\$ 112,000	\$ 1,479,000
Budget Enhancement	\$ 499,700			\$ 499,700
Strategic Business Plan	\$ 1,391,750	\$ 214,500		\$ 1,606,250
One-time Funding		\$ 2,962,000		\$ 2,962,000
New Funding Request	\$ 4,006,850	\$ 3,525,000	\$ 112,000	\$ 7,419,850
Enterprise Redirection	\$ 1,500,000			
Net Budget "Ask"	\$ 2,506,850	\$ 3,525,000	\$ 112,000	
* Revenue increase included in ZBB process.				

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Commissioner Burnett asked about the funding for extra CMPD patrolling the greenways. Director Garges responded that the Department would not have to incur that cost.

PRC Chair Report:

Conservation and Stewardship:

Commissioner Engels and Commissioner Burnett reported on conservation and stewardship from the February PRC Retreat. They shared that it was important that the most amount of green space possible in Mecklenburg County be preserved and protected from development. The Board was reminded that Board of County Commission Chair, Ella Scarborough, attended the PRC Retreat in February and was very receptive to the PRC putting together a statement/resolution regarding park preservation. Commissioner Pruess shared that she felt it important to solidify the Park and Recreation Commission's position regarding protecting park land from development.

Commissioner Burnett brought up the River District Development and the inadequate amount of land being offered in that development for parks. Director Garges said this land is outside of the County's jurisdiction and that any proposed park land in the development would have to be purchased by the County. Space for greenways would be dedicated. One positive is the Berry Hill Nature Preserve and the Berewick Regional Park located on either side of the development.

With respect to the conversation, Director Garges said he was not an advocate of the "no net loss of open space" policy as there may be situations that some loss of park land might be best for the people around a piece of property and may result in a greater benefit in the long term.

Chair Powell asked all the Commissioners to submit bullet points to her on this subject for the benefit of staff in preparing an education piece for the Board.

Executive Team Nominating Committee:

Chair Powell appointed Commissioner Barnhart as the chair of the Executive Team Nominating Committee. Each of the PRC turned in note to Commissioner Barnhart indicating their personal interest in serving on the Executive Committee. Commissioner Barnhart will ask two other Commissioners to be on the Committee. One meeting will be held to determine a slate of nominations to be presented at the next PRC meeting.

PRC Proposed Action Plan Update:

An updated proposed PRC Action Plan was presented and can be viewed here: [PRC Proposed Action Plan](#) . **Motion was made** by Commissioner Engels for the Park and Recreation Commission to adopt the action plan, which was seconded by Commissioner McMannis and approved unanimously.

Park and Recreation Applicants:

Two Park and Recreation Commission applicants will be on the BOCC agenda on April 18 for appointment to the Park and Recreation Commission; Rick Winiker for Central 3 and Marc Seelinger for South 3. Commissioner Barnhart endorsed Rick Winiker and encouraged the PRC to send a note of support to the BOCC.

Consent Items

Motion was made by Commissioner Pruess to approve all consent items, including the PRC minutes of March 14, 2017 which was seconded by Commissioner Burnett and approved unanimously.

Park Commissioners Reports:

Commissioner Martin: Progress is being made on the Abersham Greenway. Attended the recent celebration of the opening of the new indoor shelter at Horner's Nest Park.

Commissioner Burnett: Had the opportunity to play disc golf at one of our parks.

Commissioner Pruess: Appreciated the opportunity to have the PRC meeting at Veterans Park.

Commissioner McMannis: Visited Park Road Park and appreciated the improvements made to the playground.

Commissioner Bryant: Reminded the Board that the 2nd Annual Mental Health Walk would be held on May 20 at Park Road Park from 9 – 12.

Commissioner Engels: Visited each of the new greenway sections. They all looked fantastic.

Commissioner Johnson: Two golfers are retiring and will start a golf team using their own money and volunteering their time.

Commissioner Barnhart: Spent spring break in the mountains; a good reminder of the importance of preserving land.

Director Garges: Went on a tour of 6 greenways currently under construction.

Adjournment The meeting adjourned at 8:44 p.m.